

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

Janice Ashworth & Family
Mark Brenchley & Family
David Cohen & Family
John Cooper & Family
Katherine Forster
Hannah Gibson
Dana Gourleey
Aaron Hywarren
Jan Innes
Kate Jaimet & Family
Andrew MacVicar & Family
Jacquie Mansell
Dianna McCormick
Ian McDonald & Family
Cascy McKibbon & Family

Paul Merriam
Vicki Metcalfe
Sarah Morrison & Family
Victor Rakmil & Family
Heather, Sam & Madison Roberts
Grant Savage
Chris Schmidt & Family
Karen Schwinghamer & Family
Benjamin Sperling
Mary Taylor
Richard & Nhung Tomkins
Robert Vanderkam & Family
Gwendolyn Weeks
Brian Worobey & Family
Xiaolan Yang & Family

Gatineau Area

Simon Landry
Michele Lonergan & Family
Tina Vlad

Henry Steger
Chair, Membership Committee
May 2012

The President's Perspective

Summer 2012

Make it YOUR Club

A Club is what its members make it. I am inviting you to make The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club your club, reflecting what you would like to do and how you would like to see things take place.

Long time members have probably occasionally wondered:

"Why doesn't the Club do ..."

"It would be helpful if the Club did ... or ... happened."

"What the Club needs to do is"

Those of you who are newer to the Club might be surprised that the Club does not do something or that we do something in a particular way.



Well don't be shy. It is a Club, not a military command and control organization—although some days it would make my life easier if it was. There may be a reason why we do or don't do something but most things are not cast in stone. We need to evolve to survive and we need you to help make that happen. For example, it was the incredulous reaction of the younger members that resulted in us adding electronic payment for membership dues.

At the April Soirée we gave the Member of the Year Award to Barry Cottam. Barry realized that all the work that had gone into the Fletcher Wildlife Garden was being undermined by the rapid spread of the invasive Dog Strangling Vine. He thought that 'something should be done about that'. But, rather than just "think about it" he decided to "do something about it." The result was a major effort by a team of volunteers, organized by Barry, to remove the vine. It is an on-going war, as any gardener knows, and you would be welcome to help the team on Tuesday mornings. (b.cottam@rogers.com)

The example of Barry tells us not only what can happen when an individual takes an initiative but also that it can result in having to do something and taking

responsibility. For some reason that thought makes a lot of people run like a scared rabbit. However, it does not have to be as big an undertaking as Barry's. With my poor memory for names I decided a couple of years ago that we needed name tags. Yes, I did have to start the process, but it was not huge and then Brittany Boychuk offered to look after it. The result is that you are greeted at the entrance at monthly meetings, creating more of a sense of belonging to a club and not just attending a lecture. For me, I can now put more names to faces.

There are also a lot of things that might be done through the existing committees and you would not have to take it on by yourself, although you should be prepared to participate. The previous *Trail & Landscape*, Vol. 46-2, listed all the Committees on page 50 with the names and email addresses of the Chairs. Why not send your idea to the appropriate chair? If you don't know where it would fit then send it to me at the email below.

Should we set up an electronic suggestion box? If so, would you be willing to manage it, redirecting the ideas and responding to the members? Maybe we could post it online the way the ByTowne Cinema prints responses to their members' suggestions in their flyers.

We often read about how one person can make a difference in the world. Personally, I find these stories more than a bit daunting in scope and ambition. Fortunately, in the Club, you can make a difference without going to such lengths. Share your thoughts. Often one idea sparks ideas and suggestions in others leading to meaningful improvements in the Club. You will get satisfaction from the implementation of your idea and your Club will be better for it.

Ann MacKenzie
annmackenzie@rogers.com

51st Annual Ottawa Regional Science Fair—OFNC Awards

Jeff Skevington¹ and Carolyn Callaghan²

This year, the Ottawa Regional Science Fair was held on March 24 at Carleton University. Students in grades 7-12 submitted about 200 projects to the Fair this year. This is always a fabulous showcase of projects and ideas by our next generation of scientists.

Every year the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club presents three awards to groups that present excellent projects related to natural history or to the ideals of the Club. If you know any students in this age group, please encourage them to conduct natural history research projects for future Science Fairs. If you need help with ideas for projects, we will be happy to assist.

The following students each won an award of \$100 and OFNC membership. This year we had an unusual event in that two of the winners were repeat winners from last year. Adamo and Shamus both won OFNC Science Fair awards in 2011 and went on to extend their projects for this year. This was clearly a good strategy as they learned from last year and did some excellent new research that netted both a number of awards. Summaries of the projects are below.



Shamus McCoy

The Ordovician Silurian extinction event was the second largest mass extinction, and yet has been little studied. This project aimed to determine what may have caused

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this extinction. All fossil elements were analyzed, from minerals to species and populations, with the help of light microscopes and micro photography. Using the data that he collected, Shamus was able to hypothesize that this mass extinction may have been caused by a catastrophic super volcanic event.



Maya Perelman and Annie Zhang

Maya and Amy studied published data on Lynx population dynamics. They used genetic simulation to re-discover some advanced genetic principles about population size and inbreeding and maintenance of genetic diversity.

Adamo Young

The diamondback moth (*Plutella xylostella*) (L) (Lepidoptera: Plutellidae) is a pest invasive to North America that attacks canola

crops and is resistant to pesticides. Adamo studied the parasitism effectiveness of the wasps *Microplitis plutellae* (Haliday) (Hymenoptera: Braconidae) and *Diadegma insulare* (Muesebeck) (Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae) in controlling the diamondback at different host densities. Both species of wasps were exposed to different densities of the host in the laboratory (5, 10, and 20 per wasp), and the effectiveness of each wasp in parasitizing the Diamondback population at each density was evaluated and compared. *Microplitis plutellae* was shown to perform better at lower densities, while *D. insulare* was shown to perform consistently throughout the densities tested.



The 2012 Soirée and the Awards for 2011

K. McLachlan Hamilton

Say goldeneye and I'll spit in your eye
I'm the one species of my genus
I got a saw-bill like the meanest
You can admire my contractile crest,
But never say buffleheadesque
Now Dow's swamp is no more the best
I've got to move and build my nest.

For those who attended the annual OFNC soirée already know what this is.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend, but I heard that it was just one of the activities the evening of 21 April. I asked a few people what they thought of the evening, and they said it was a lot of fun. Apparently over 80 people attended, some, like Rob, were new to the Club, and others, like Frank, are long time members. Another long time member mentioned she was pleased to see many new faces. The evening always has a delicious array of snacks and treats, a fine selection of wine and beverages, and plenty of photos/artwork to enjoy (congratulations to Suzanne and Grant for producing the evening's favourites).

It seemed everyone commented on the Macoun Field Club exhibits. Carlos (Snowy Owl), Dawn (Cold Hardiness in *Lasius minutus*) and Patrick (Environmental Assessment (of the area near the General Hospital that is going to be turned into a roadway)) did a fantastic job on their projects, and the adults thoroughly enjoyed talking with them. I have always thought that this group is one of the real gems of the Club.

Anouk, who has taken on the responsibility of the Falcon Watch, brought the display describing the watch. Members expressed a lot of interest in our resident falcons, Connor and Diana. After two unsuccessful years, it is hoped that 2012 will be good. I'm sure we will get an update from Anouk if it was successful.



Rick Cavasin brought a large poster he created of the many of the butterflies occurring in this region. The poster was graphically and scientifically flawless and would be an excellent tool for local enthusiasts.

The format had differed from previous years. Firstly, there were more presenters and the awards were presented in a casual manner. They were presented throughout the evening, interspersed with the quizzes. This year Ann decided to talk about the recipient and why he/she was chosen for the award rather than read the citation verbatim. She did a stellar job, as she covered each citation's content without using notes. The following are excerpts from the official citation, the complete versions will be published in an upcoming *Canadian Field Naturalist*.

This year six awards were presented. Those recognized were: Barry Cottam (Member of the Year); Ann Prescott (George McGee Service Award); Ted Mosquin (Conservation Award-Member); Colin Freebury (Anne Hanes Natural History Award); Fred Schueler and Aleta Karstad (Mary Stuart Education Award); Joe Dafoe (President's Prize).

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden has become "less invasive" due to Barry and his team of volunteers. Their dedication every Tuesday, from spring to fall, to the removal of Dog-strangling Vine or DSV (*Cynanchum rossicum*) was unprecedented. Apparently, one day was not enough for Barry, as he organized additional work bees



and was often seen alone in the garden removing this weed. The result was 225 industrial-sized garbage bags, not to mention the countless piles, were removed from various parts of the garden. Their successes were noticeable last summer, and there are plans to continue the project in 2012.

If you have attended a monthly meeting, then chances are you have met Ann. She has been responsible for the sales' table for



many years. As the citation notes, Ann tirelessly transports the promotional materials, set up the displays before members arrive, then packs everything up once the meeting has begun. Ann has also represented the Club at eco-fairs, wildlife festivals, and at various government sponsored events, where she welcomed the public and answered questions they posed.

Colin's new-found fascination with lichens, his keen eye and attention to detail led to "The Lichens of Gatineau Park" published in *Trail & Landscape* (Volume 45, issue

2). This checklist is based on herbarium specimens, field work and literature findings. The location of all 324 species is documented as well as any specific information and relative abundance. The article also includes descriptions of four study sites and an extensive reference list.

"Liehens of Gatineau Park" is a valuable resource for anyone interested in

these unique plants. Copies are still available, feel free to contact me (information on last page of this issue) if you would like a copy.



Although Ted has been involved in several issues over the years, he was recognized primarily for his involvement with the Purdon Fen Conservation Area. His long-term management plan and his work as advisor and interpreter has helped significantly in the protection of the Showy Lady's-Slipper colony. The number of people who have visited this site is probably in the thousands. Some of his other projects include the Mississippi-Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy, the Mississippi Conservation Foundation and the Lanark Highlands Environmental Advisory Committee. Coincidentally, Ted's work was featured in the same issue as Colin's checklist.

Mudpuppy night in Oxford Mills is an event not to be missed. It has become an annual excursion for the Club. I suggest everyone go at least once. This event is all due to the efforts of Fred and Aleta. Most Friday nights throughout the winter they can be found at the dam in Oxford Mills. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join them, and should check out their website

(<http://pinicola.ca/mudpup1.htm>).

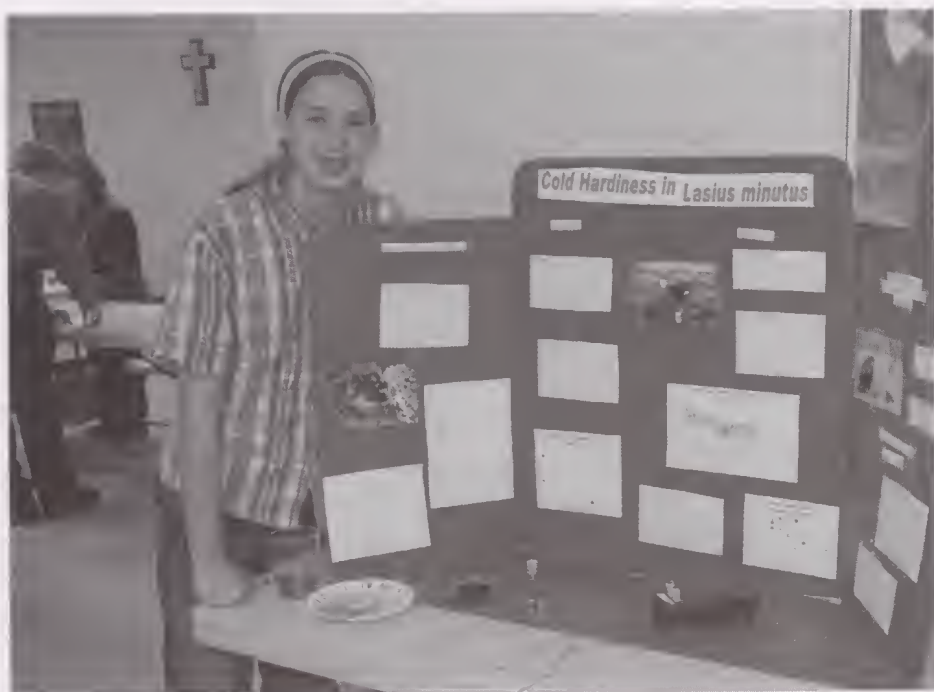


It sounded like a very nice evening. I'm sorry I missed it. I would like to thank Fenja, Stephen, Hume, Christine, Anouk, and Frank for their contributions to this article. I will end with another poem and some photos of the evening.



I'm best known for my shiny sides
my cousin rides the briny tides.
Got a brief life like *Arabidopsis*,
way too small to salt up in boxes.
Watch me feed on sunny rides
as I leap for chironomids.
Or . . .
Watch me leap between the bridges,
ya I'll eat some flying midges.











Answers to poems: Hooded Merganser and Brook Silverside.

Some thoughts on Blanding's Turtles

Pauline Catling



Figure 1. Blanding's Turtle. Photo Dan Robichaud. Used with permission.

As spring approaches we see the familiar sights of birds returning to their summer homes, insects emerging from their winter hideouts and reptiles basking in the warmth of the sun. As usual, spring brings along with it the mating season for many animals. Unfortunately for turtles, the mating season and later egg laying in particular is becoming increasingly dangerous. Blanding's Turtles (Figure 1) evidently move overland before the need to lay eggs. First observations on roads this year were April 17 in Prince Edward County at Cressy and April 20 near

Oxford Station in Grenville County (eggs are laid in June). They may be more susceptible due to increased overland travel and may be more adapted to terrestrial conditions (high dome and hinged plastron—permitting them to completely close their shell like a box turtle). If they are more terrestrial than other turtles, they are more at risk from automobile collisions. A female turtle will travel great distances in order to lay her eggs and then she will return to the wetland or lake that she came from. In this process, gravid turtles will often have to cross many roads.

Several species of turtles in Ontario are at risk, including the Blanding's Turtle. This species is listed as endangered in Nova Scotia and threatened in Quebec and Ontario (COSEWIC 2011, MNR 2011). The Blanding's Turtle overwinters in lakes, and in the deeper areas of wetlands or ponds. They emerge in April (Ontario) and move to spend their summers in swamps or shallower temporary wetlands (MDFW 2007, Conant and Collins 1998, Ernst and Barbour 1989). These omnivores clean up carrion and help control wetland plant populations (MDFW 2007). More importantly, they are a fascinating part of that delicate balance that allows a rich diversity of plants and animals to live together.

Blanding's Turtles are easily recognized by their bright yellow throat and the "army helmet" shape of their domed shell. As one of the longest living freshwater turtles they have been used in studies of aging, conservation and demography (COSEWIC 2005). They can live for over 75 years and females reach sexual maturity after 14-21 years (Congdon et al. 2001). Each year, females will lay clutches of 3-19 eggs (Congdon et al. 2001) usually around June (Conant and Collins 1998, Ernst and Barbour 1989). Older females have increased reproductive output compared to younger ones (Congdon et al. 2001). Gravid female turtles wander overland each year to find suitable nesting sites and are often attracted to the gravel and sand on the shoulders of roads (Steen et al. 2006). Blanding's Turtles are known to travel long distances between marshes and individuals have also been observed on week-long overland movements from winter to summer habitats (Edge et al. 2010). Turtles are often most active during the high traffic hours of dawn and dusk (Steen and Gibbs 2004). Our rush hours are the same which poses a very high risk to any turtle that needs to get across a busy road.

What is happening?

Road mortality is known to be a threat to turtles due to habitat fragmentation and direct population losses (Gibbs and Shriver 2002). However, for Blanding's Turtles, it is a significant threat in June since the wandering turtles are likely mature females looking for nest sites. If a female carrying eggs is hit on the road, not only does she not lay her eggs, but it will take years for a younger turtle to replace her as a sexually mature member of the population (Steen et al. 2006). Thus, even a slight increase in adult mortality can threaten turtle populations (MDFW 2007). Blanding's Turtles

are of particular concern in terms of road mortality since they do travel far and often between marshes throughout the summer as well. Road mortality is reducing the number of females and creating a male-biased population (Steen et al. 2006). Steen et al. (2006) found that road mortality has a larger effect on female turtles, which is consistent with personal observations along Roger Stevens Drive in Marlborough Forest, south of Ottawa over the last two summers. There, the majority of turtle casualties were also female.

Skunks, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, opossums and crows do not commonly predate adult turtles but will eat turtle eggs (Conant and Collins 1998, Ernst and Barbour 1989). The survival rate from 1983-1991 was on average 3.3%, but can range from 0-63% (COSEWIC 2005). Increased nest predation due to increasingly large numbers of these animals occurs as a result of human agriculture and garbage. Like roads, these subsidized predators are having a major negative effect on the survival rate of turtle eggs (CARCNET 2012). In order to protect eggs from predation, parks often cover turtle nests with wire mesh screens (COSEWIC 2005). Hatchling turtles are also at high risk of predation from fish, bullfrogs, snakes and birds (COSEWIC 2005).

Another threat to turtles is a species of sarcophagid fly (*Tripanurga importuna*) which often scavenges necrotic tissue including damaged eggs but may also attack live embryos or hatchlings (Bolton et al. 2008). The full extent of damage to healthy embryos and hatchlings is still unknown. In 2001, Gillingwater and Brooks (2002) reported that 100% of Blanding's Turtle nests at Rondeau Provincial Park were attacked by sarcophagid fly larvae and all the affected embryos and hatchlings perished within a few days.

Analysis of Blanding's Turtle Range in Ontario

In Canada, the Blanding's Turtle occurs in Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. In Ontario, Blanding's Turtles have a distribution that is pronounced along the southern edge of the Canadian Shield (Figure 2). Here, human impacts are less in a non-agricultural landscape where rich wetlands are present due to calcareous substrates. Half of the squares (53%) on the map are historical sightings which does not necessarily mean that they are unoccupied, but it can provide some ideas about trends through comparison with other parts of the map. For example, in the Carolinian region of Ontario (most of the southwest) 65% of the squares are historical. Why more historical squares in the southwest? It may be because there has been a greater decline in turtle numbers in this part of the region than elsewhere. This is what one would expect based on the increased threat in an area with higher human population, since the threats are mainly related to people. As the human population increases along the edges of the Canadian Shield, this area may experience a decline in the turtle population. Although a number of assumptions are

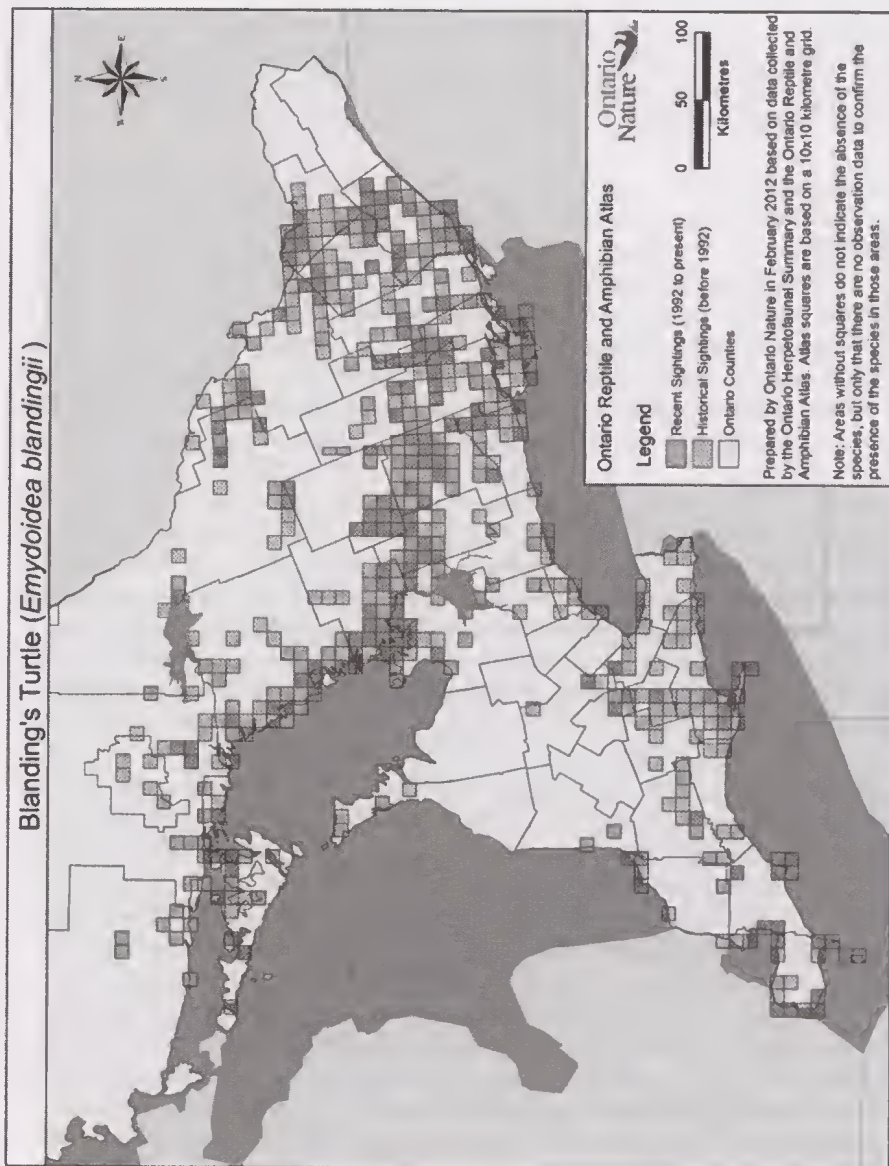


Figure 2. Blanding's Turtle range in Ontario (Ontario Nature 2011).

necessary, they do raise some interesting possibilities that might be explored with surveys.

A New Evaluation of Threat Impact in Ontario

Using the threats assessment worksheet provided by NatureServe (NatureServe 2009, Master et al. 2009), I considered the proportion of the species that would be threatened within the next 10 years in Ontario. The threats included: habitat destruction, nest predation by subsidized predators (see above), nest predation by sarcophagid flies, road mortality, damming and the pet trade. This consideration included variations and the likelihood of these threats in different parts of the range. The process also required a consideration of the level of damage (severity, expressed as a percentage of the species that would be affected). When completed, the calculated overall threat impact for Blanding's Turtle was considered VERY HIGH in Ontario. This is useful information which was not available for the last (2005) status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), since the NatureServe Threat Assessment procedure became available in 2009.

The VERY HIGH threat impact reflects a reduction of a species population, and the median rate of reduction at a level of 75% (Master et al. 2009, p. 27). This is important since it invites consideration by COSEWIC under its A-listed criteria (A3—projected or suspected reduction by more than 50% over a 10-year period using an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon) to change its status. It is worrying that some of the latest thinking on the subject may make the Blanding's Turtle endangered when it is now only listed as threatened. Its status will again be reviewed by COSEWIC in 2015.

Significance to the Ottawa Region

Blanding's Turtle populations occur on both sides of the Ottawa River (COSEWIC 2005). Road mortality occurs at sites near Ottawa including areas west of Gatineau Park (Quebec) and the Marlborough Forest (Ontario). The Marlborough Forest on the edge of the Ottawa District is an unfortunate example of road mortality in Blanding's Turtles. The forest is split by Roger Stevens Drive which receives a lot of the traffic between Smiths Falls and Ottawa. Last spring (May-June) I personally observed 15 Blanding's Turtles, seven Snapping Turtles and 37 Painted Turtles along Roger Stevens Drive near or within the Marlborough Forest on my commute to work. Of these 15 Blanding's Turtles, only five were alive when I got to them. Of the seven Snapping Turtles, three were dead when I found them. The defense mechanism of all of these turtles is to curl up inside their shell when frightened. This doesn't help them get across the road very fast and to avoid automobiles.

Urban expansion is occurring in Ottawa and this is another threat. Areas such as South March Highlands and areas near Albion Road which both support wetlands with known Blanding's Turtle populations are being developed (Sierra Club Canada 2010). As Ottawa is expanding, traffic is increasing in previously wild areas. People must be increasingly aware of the wildlife on the roads if we want to preserve it. If we don't, those who notice turtles will see them quickly disappear. The Ottawa area includes some important populations of Blanding's Turtles and if we can protect them here, then there is some hope for other parts of their Canadian range.

How can we conserve turtle populations?

Ontario has the largest diversity of turtles of all of the Canadian provinces (CARCNET) and all but the Painted Turtle are considered species at risk. Even familiar Painted Turtles are now in trouble in some areas. That being said, turtles are not without hope. Many people and organizations work to protect turtles in Ontario. Everyone has the ability to do something to help.

Road mortality can be decreased by erecting drift fences and culverts underneath roadways. The success of this method has been proven in Florida (Dodd et al. 2004). Turtle crossing signs can help to make people aware of areas of seasonally high crossing frequency. If you see these signs, use them as a reminder to watch the road more carefully. I am in the process of trying to get turtle crossing signs through the Toronto Zoo's Adopt-A-Pond program which supports conservation of species at risk in Ontario. Donations to this program can help fund projects in various areas in Ontario. You can also request their assistance with your own projects as I have. Raising awareness and encouraging people to value turtles in their area is vital to conserving the populations of the Ottawa District and throughout Canada. Although many people would swerve to miss hitting a pet or a large mammal many do not avoid or would actually try to hit turtles on the road. I have witnessed turtles get hit on the road as I was standing on the shoulder waiting to safely remove them. Be aware of the road while driving and watch out for turtles. You can report turtle sightings and road casualties to the Ontario herpetofaunal atlas at:

http://www.ontarionature.org/protect/species/herpetofaunal_atlas.php.

Observations from naturalists can be used to increase our knowledge and focus our attention to areas in need of conservation.

The best thing you can do is to learn more and get involved with the conservation efforts. There has been a lot of research recently on Blanding's Turtle habitat use and range but continued research and conservation will be needed to ensure that they and other Ontario turtles are protected adequately. If you are interested in seeing some of the places where Blanding's and other turtles occur in the Ottawa District, see the special publication of *Trail & Landscape* by Francis Cook, "Amphibians and Reptiles of the Ottawa District" (Cook 1981).

Acknowledgements

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Ostrander Point—will it still be a hotspot?

Paul Catling, Sheila McKay-Kuja, Brenda Kostiuk, and Allen Kuja

With the famous Sandbanks, as good as any beach on Cape Cod, and wine tasting at an increasing number of wineries, cheese factories, apple orchards, many special and historic Bed and Breakfast places to stay, special events all year, spectacular drives with never ending views of Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte, and flowering pears, apples and lilacs in abundance, as well as the best boating and fishing in southern Ontario, it is no wonder that people flock to Prince Edward . . . and would like to retire there. Many people come often from as far away as Ottawa or Toronto.

Actually the attractiveness of "The County" has something to do with its "naturalness." It is a place with some remarkable biodiversity despite relatively few protected areas. It is in fact a special region of southern Ontario with a small human population and a climate moderated by winds off Lake Ontario. It has plants and animals otherwise only known from the Canada's special Carolinian Zone on the north shore of Lake Erie. One of the special natural areas is Ostrander Point Crown Land Block, a little west of Ostrander Point (Figures 1 and 2). It offers pleasant walks through extensive shrublands and spectacular views of the limestone pavements of the south shore. A recent visit on 20 May heightened our awareness of this special area and the serious problems faced by its biodiversity.

Alvar plant species

We found many unusual plants, a number of these were species that only occur on alvars, a kind of globally imperilled habitat described as more or less treeless areas of shallow soil over flat limestone rock. Although alvar pavements are not present at Ostrander Point, two major alvar plant associations are well represented. These are Red Cedar-Prickly Ash gravelly alvar and the Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)-Prickly Ash savanna. The former is best developed on higher gravelly places in the middle of the area and the latter is best developed on the east side.

The alvar habitats at Ostrander Point have a good representation of characteristic alvar plants (see Catling 1995). Among these are the largest populations in Ontario of the Canadian Summer Bluet (*Houstonia canadensis*, Figure 3), as well as Craze's Sedge (*Carex crazei*), Compressed Spike-Rush (*Eleocharis compressa*), Limestone Dropseed (*Sporobolus vaginiflorus*), Tufted Hair Grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*),

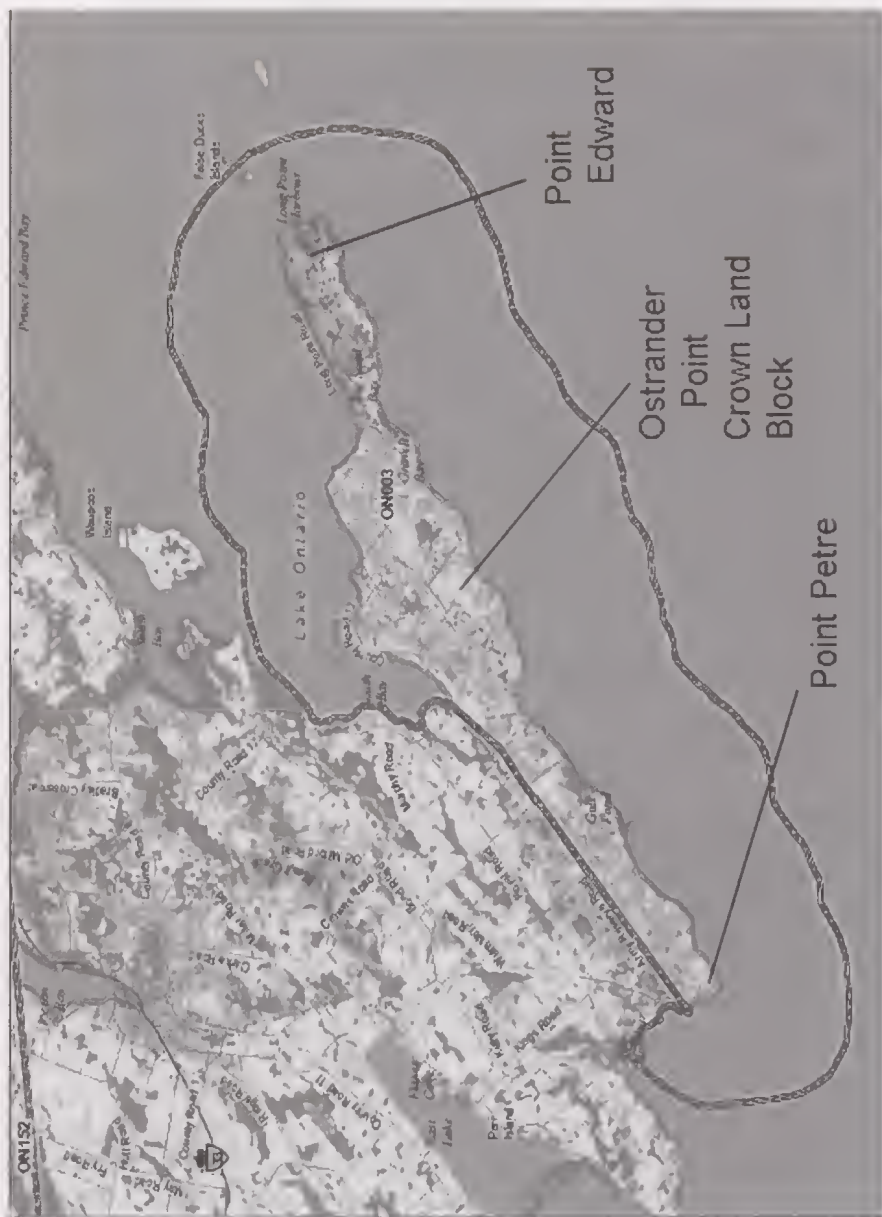


Figure 1. South shore of Prince Edward County.

Clammy Hedge-Hyssop (*Gratiola neglecta*), Early Buttercup (*Ranunculus fascicularis*), Fragrant Sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), Soapberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*), Alvar Saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia* var. *compacta*), Umbellate Sedge (*Carex umbellata*), Seneca Snakeroot (*Polygala senega*), Wiry Panic Grass (*Panicum flexile*), Narrow-leaf Vervain (*Verbena simplex*), False Pennyroyal (*Isanthus brachiatus*) and Frost Aster (*Symphyotrichum pilosum*). Since alvar is a globally imperilled ecosystem, the presence of these alvar plants and associations at Ostrander Point is a reason to protect the area.



Figure 2. The Ostrander Point Crown Land Block on the middle south shore of Prince Edward County. The area is a biodiversity hotspot—now.

Other notable plants

On our brief visit on 20 May we saw a number of other unusual plants. The attractive white Cuckoo-Flower (*Cardamine pratensis*) was growing in abundance in some of the Ash swamps. Sartwell's Sedge (*Carex sartwellii*), a species adapted to periodically drying pools was present in a number of places. This distinctive tall sedge has clusters of spikelets in a head at the top of individual stems attached to a



Figure 3. Canadian Summer Bluet (Houstonia canadensis). Above, habitat in limestone gravel with Red Cedar and Prickly Ash. Below, close up of the flowers. Photo by P. Catling and B. Kostiuk, Ostrander Point, 19 May 2012.

creeping rhizome. It is uncommon in the county outside the alvar region of the south shore. In the Bur Oak savanna and elsewhere, Golden Alexanders (*Zizia aurea*) were in full flower near that unusual member of the Honeysuckle family, the Orange-Fruit Horse-Gentian (*Triosteum aurantiacum*) which was unusually abundant here. Spotted Geraniums (*Geranium maculatum*) and Wild Blue Phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) were also in flower. In one place, beside a wet meadow, in the open, was an impressive clump of Small Southern Yellow Lady's-Slipper Orchids (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *makasin*). The provincially rare Downy Woodmint (*Blephilia ciliata*) is also believed to occur on this site.

Many unusual birds

Much of the Ostrander Point area is a shrubland with Prickly Ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*), Gray Dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), Nannyberry Viburnum (*Viburnum lentago*), Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and Narrow-leaved Meadowsweet (*Spiraea alba*) with open grassy areas and temporary wetlands. This is an ideal habitat for a number of unusual birds. We found Clay-colored Sparrows to be common throughout the area and Ostrander Point may have one of the largest populations in Ontario. This sparrow has a very restricted distribution in the province (for maps see <http://www.birdsontario.org/atlas/maps.jsp?lang=en>). Much more restricted is the endangered Loggerhead Shrike which is reported to breed in the Ostrander Point area. The point area may be the only place in the county and one of the few places in Ontario where the Whip-poor-will still breeds. This is one of several aerial foraging insect-eaters that has recently declined by over 30% in Canada (http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=1822). Ostrander Point has also been managed for recovery of the endangered Henslow's Sparrow. Despite a comeback, the majestic Peregrine Falcon is still threatened and one fitted with a satellite transmitter has spent the last two winters hunting the south shore which includes the Ostrander Point Area.

There are many other birds of conservation concern that use the point area and several of these breed there (Table 1). As well as these birds that are at risk or likely to become at risk, are many others that are rare and restricted such as Grasshopper Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, and Upland Sandpipers. American Woodcock and Common Snipe breed in significant numbers at Ostrander Point. Perhaps of most interest to many people is the fact that the south shore of Prince Edward County including Ostrander Point is the largest Saw-Whet Owl migration route in North America (Figure 4, Sprague and Weir 1987)



Figure 4. The Prince Edward County south shore is the largest Saw-Whet Owl migration route in North America (Sprague and Weir 1987) and Ostrander Point is a major element of this shoreline. Thousands of people have seen Saw-Whets at the bird observatory during fall migration on special Owl nights. The observatory also has an Adopt an Owl program. These small owls are particularly susceptible to traffic and have been killed on the existing south shore roads (personal observation and banding recoveries). Increased traffic as a result of turbine construction and maintenance is will likely have an impact regardless of any mortality due to turbine blades, floodlights and guy wires. Photo by P. Catling and B. Kostiuik, Prince Edward Point, 17 October 2010.



An arctic Diving Duck

On our 20 May visit, one of the unexpected observations for us was the large flock of Long-tailed Ducks. They breed in the arctic. We were thinking late spring and early summer, and when we heard the distinctive sound of these ducks more than a kilometre out across the unusually still waters of Lake Ontario, we were pleasantly surprised. Of course it was still not quite summer in their far northern breeding ground. The shoals and deeper waters off the south shore are important staging areas for provincially significant Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter as well as the Long-tailed Ducks. Daily migratory peaks reach the tens of thousands. The spectacular Long-tailed Duck is the symbol of the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists Club, a group that is playing a huge role of advocacy for nature on behalf of many thousands of people who visit the county each year.

[Long-tailed Duck photo taken by Guy Monty, Deep Bay, Vancouver Island, 20 Feb. 2011, used with permission.]

Blanding's Turtle and other reptiles

There are not many places in Ontario where Blanding's Turtles are not at risk, because of their relatively extensive wanderings, and of being killed by traffic on a busy paved road. Ostrander Point is one of these special more protected places. Here they might be expected to survive some time into the future because the natural area is extensive. Of course this has some benefit to other turtles of conservation concern. Although it has not yet received as much attention as the Blanding's, Eastern Musk Turtle is threatened and known from the Point. Also in the area and of conservation concern are Snapping Turtle, Northern Map Turtle and Milksnake.

Giant Swallowtail and a diversity of insects

On 20 May we saw a freshly emerged Giant Swallowtail Butterfly (*Papilio cresphontes*) on the south shore sipping water from small pools on the limestone rock (Figure 5). The caterpillars of this large swallowtail feed on Prickly Ash. This

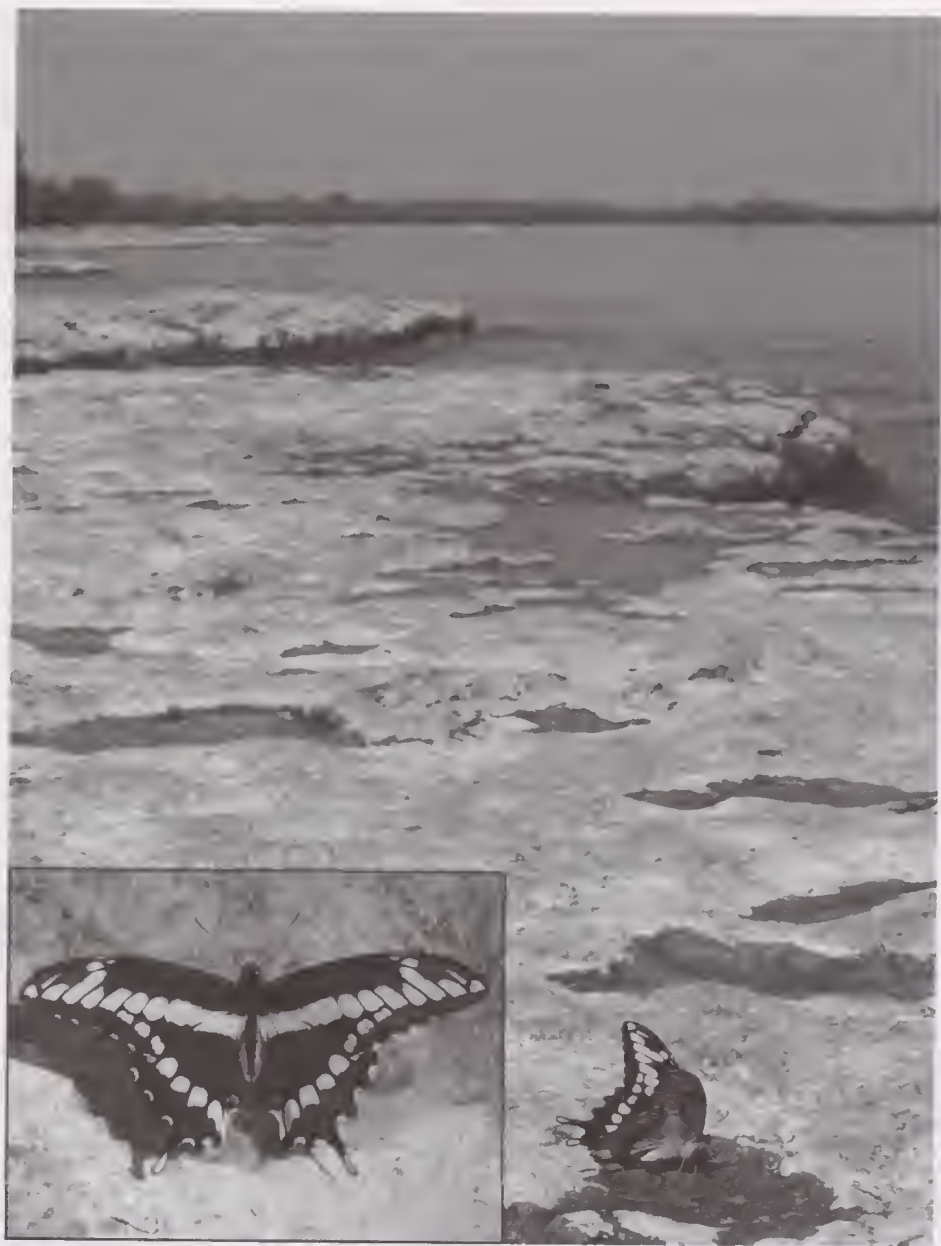


Figure 5. Giant Swallowtail taking water from a puddle in the limestone pavement. Photo by P. Catling and B. Kostiuk, Prince Edward Point, 19 May 2012.

remarkable shrub, actually a member of the citrus family, is abundant in the Ostrander Point area. The fruits look and smell like tiny limes. This spectacular butterfly is now much more common in Prince Edward County than in its main former Canadian range on the north shore of Lake Erie where is now confined to a few isolated locations.

Also common at Ostrander Point, and first appearing in May, is the southern alvar race of the Pearl Crescent butterfly (*Phyciodes tharos*), the larvae of which feed on Frost Aster. One of Ontario's rarest damselflies finds a home in the temporary pools. This is the Citrine Forktail (*Ischnura hastata*), the smallest damselfly in northeastern North America. Major migrations of dragonflies that we have seen in this area in the fall include Green Darners (*Anax junius*), Black Saddlebags (*Tramea lacerata*), Wandering Glider (*Pantala flavescens*) and Spot-winged Glider (*Pantala hymenaea*). These species require a safe migration route and they provide food for birds migrating at the same time.

Crown land, candidate ANSI and IBA

Ostrander Point is not actually a provincial wildlife area, as indicated on the most recent county map. It is in fact crown land and best referred to as the "Ostrander Point Crown Land Block." The Green Energy Act, passed in Feb. 2009 (became law in May 2009) enabled construction of renewable energy installations, such as wind turbines, on certain provincial lands, including crown lands. Of course there is wind in lots of places, but now crown lands were targeted. This was a shock because it raised the question of how far we would go in using crown lands to the detriment of wildlife and the compromise of key Canadian landscapes.

Some of the great ecologists of our time have said that the battle to protect Canadian biodiversity will be won or lost on the land between the protected sites. This was because there are not enough of them and they are not connected. Some hoped that we could start with the protected areas and add to that base with increased protective attitudes on the part of landowners led by exemplary protection of natural resources by governments. Ostrander Point is a key location in this concept of connectivity being a link between Prince Edward Point and Point Petre. The former is second only to the world-renowned Point Pelee National Park in its numbers and diversity of birds.

With a huge diversity of birds and being on a major North American migration route, it is not surprising that the south shore of Prince Edward County is an Important Bird Area (IBA). Ostrander Point is part of this area which is considered significant in the IBA program on both a global and national scale (http://www.ibacanada.ca/iba_program.jsp?lang=EN and <http://www.ibacanada.ca/site.jsp?siteID=ON003>).

Ostrander Point Crown Land Block is also recognized as a candidate for Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) with a useful ANSI report (Snetsinger 2000) sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The author suggested that: *"Due to some parts of the site having globally significant status, as well as the site's importance to migratory birds and its unique botanical characteristics, it is recommended that the Prince Edward Point to Ostrander Point be considered a provincially significant ANSI."*

How "green" are giant turbines?

There is unnecessary damage to natural areas as a result of any kind of construction. In the case of turbines there will be many kilometres of new roads and culverts to enable construction and continuous servicing as well as turbine pads and trenches for buried cables. The entire area would be affected including hydrologically sensitive alvar habitats and significant wildlife habitat (SWH) for birds, etc. It is sometimes thought that turbines are only going to affect a few flying insects, but in fact construction and maintenance can totally destroy a biologically significant natural landscape.

Regardless of major destruction of the landscape, turbines are damaging to migratory hawks, bats and insects (Monarchs and dragonflies), and their presence on Ostrander Point, a major migration route, may have significant impact, especially on hawks and owls. Turbines on nearby Wolfe Island, in the same migratory corridor, have had the highest mortality rate by wind turbines anywhere in the province (Friesen 2011). Although even the fatality levels here have not been considered significant, the information on the impact on certain species may be incomplete. For example, these turbines are believed to have caused the disappearance of the Short-eared Owls from Wolfe Island (<http://southshoreconservancy.wordpress.com/2011/05/19/wolfe-island-wind-turbines-cause-disappearance-of-short-eared-owl/>). This is a species of conservation concern (Table 1) and the Wolfe Island area has been one of the few breeding areas for the species in the southern part of the province.

Turbines are noisy and they may also be a disturbance to some wildlife. The turbines that have been planned for Ostrander Point are giants—over 400' high (much higher than the Ottawa Peace Tower and much less peaceful), with blades rotating in a 300' circle (a 1.5 acre sweep—the area of two American football fields). It is notable that studies of impacts of turbines on wildlife are based on much smaller turbines than these recently developed giants (Clotuche 2006).

There would likely be no access for people anywhere near these towers. Wildlife will be destroyed and people would be shut out.

The development of giant turbines on the south shore of Prince Edward is not confined to Ostrander Point. In another area nearby, habitat destruction and road building has already begun ahead of the conclusion of public consultation. The Environmental impact statements are incomplete and misleading. Some have noted that the turbine business could be a lot greener!

IS THIS A BALANCED VIEW?

"The collective evidence to date suggests the risk to birds from wind energy projects is low relative to other anthropogenic factors and is unlikely to be causing significant population declines. However, wildlife, including many bird populations, is under increasing pressure worldwide because of rapidly expanding human populations and associated land-use activities. **Not every area need be developed for wind energy, particularly those encompassing uncommon or unique habitats, or that have unusually high concentrations of wildlife including species at risk.**"

... Lyle Friesen, Canadian Wildlife Service.

It is "balanced," but it is also worth emphasizing that the turbine issue does not deserve a "one size fits all" reaction. The impact data is incomplete, different kinds of birds are differently impacted, and in particular different locations will have hugely different impacts—and it is not just about birds, but includes a number of other life forms (turtles, plants and people, etc.).

Specifically what may happen?

While it may be true that the impact of turbines on wildlife will vary with location (Cloutche 2006), there is absolutely no doubt that there will be substantial negative impact on the Prince Edward's south shore. The Blandings Turtle and Whip-poor-will are both recognized as threatened in Ontario (<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Species/2ColumnSubPage/276722.html>) and both are listed as threatened federally (http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/search/default_e.cfm) under the Species at Risk Act. Since Blanding's Turtles use terrestrial habitat extensively, their habitat will be altered and made more risky as a result of more roads and more traffic. They may go (Figure 6), but where? The breeding Whip-poor-wills will likely suffer outright mortality as well as being affected by destruction of flying insects upon which they rely for food (Long et al. 2011). In case they did stay around in a degraded habitat, the aerial displays of woodcocks and snipes may bring them within the blade zone of the turbines. There are 22 species of conservation importance of which 16 breed in the area and others use it for staging (Table 1). One could go on and on with likely impacts, but the truth is that most wildlife species in the area will be negatively affected. Moreover the place may become a fatal trap for some migrants.



Figure 6. A clever (but not very funny) cartoon from the *Wellington Times* (15 Feb. 2012). This illustrates the fragility of biodiversity on Crown Land and of course the turtles are really threatened (see accompanying article in this volume) and the south side of Prince Edward County is one of the few areas of Ontario where there may be some hope for their survival. As one newspaper writer put it: "The attempt to save our environment by destroying its inhabitants is more than ironic, it's moronic." That might get a smile, but in fact it just another clever but sadly truthful observation.

In December 2011, Canada's Senate unanimously passed a motion: That, in the opinion of the Senate, the province of Ontario should institute a moratorium on the approval of wind energy projects on islands and onshore areas within three kilometres of the shoreline in the Upper St. Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario region, from the western tip of Prince Edward County to the eastern edge of Wolfe Island, until the significant threat to congregating, migrating or breeding birds and migrating bats is investigated thoroughly and restrictions imposed to protect internationally recognized important bird areas from such developments.

Overwhelming concern

There is an environmental impact study that was done for the builder, but it did not find a number of the significant biological features mentioned here. Nevertheless, the value of the site to wildlife is widely known. So far local environmental groups including the Prince Edward County Naturalists Club, the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, the Alliance to Protect Prince Edward County and the Point to Point Foundation have been very active in opposing the development at Ostrander Point.

Nature Canada is for renewable energy but definitely not at Ostrander Point. Ontario Nature, National Audubon Society, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, have all opposed the development of turbines on Prince Edward's south shore. These groups actually represent many thousands of people inside and outside Canada. It seems unlikely that this project could move forward in the face of such universal opposition. It is important to remember what so many people are opposing—it is the locating of turbines here—not turbines in general.

The Prince Edward County Council has also supported the protection of Ostrander Point from turbines on 24 May 2011



Figure 7. Marching against the turbines at Ostrander Point on the main street of Picton on 20 May 2011. Photo by Linda Horn. (see <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=9929>).

following an earlier march against turbines down the main street of Picton (Figure 7). There have been some public meetings involving local residents and all of these have voiced strong opposition.

For more information on the wind turbine issue in Prince Edward County, see the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists website: http://naturestuff.net/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=137&Itemid=33

A vision for the South Shore

The Point to Point Foundation, a group of concerned local citizens, has a compelling vision to protect the south shore of Prince Edward County. It was established specifically to protect the 27 km stretch between Point Petre and Prince Edward Point (also known as Point Edward and Point Traverse). The goal is to protect the IBA, wetlands, unique habitat, migratory bird route, wildlife and to contribute to the establishment of a National Marine Heritage Conservation Area. Although this vision may be less well known than other conservation themes such as the Frontenac Axis, it is of major importance to wildlife and to people.

The answer to the question

A decision on the protection of Ostrander Point is expected in June 2012. To many, Prince Edward County is an exemplary paradise and some of Ontario's conservation initiatives are also a source of pride. To some degree it has become an issue that will enable us to better predict where we are going. The analysis of the result will indicate the problems or the strengths of our system. Remember the old Ontario license plate—"Ontario—keep it beautiful?" Now it is "Yours to discover," but what will we discover? Will it be an unplanned landscape with a muddle of everything in the wrong places?

THANKS

Myrna Wood of Picton received the **Nature Canada Volunteer Award**. This was given in recognition of her outstanding contribution of work and time to a Nature Canada project and her deep love and respect for nature. Driven by a personal mission to conserve her community's natural heritage, Wood has worked tirelessly to protect Prince Edward County's wildlife and habitat. She was instrumental in developing a conservation plan for an IBA, and has since been an ardent advocate for the birds that depend on the Prince Edward County South Shore IBA for habitat. As part of this work she became a major worker in the campaign to protect Ostrander Point.

What can you do?

- (1) Join Nature Canada's "Get wind power right in Canada's campaign" (see http://www.naturecanada.ca/take_action.asp).
- (2) Join the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. This group has supported the protection of the south shore and gathers important information on status of bird populations (<http://www.peptbo.ca/infomembership.html>).
- (3) Visit the Point to Point website (<http://pointtopointpec.ca/>).
- (4) Visit the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists site (http://naturestuff.net/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=137&Itemid=33).
- (5) Visit the South Shore Conservancy Website (<http://southshoreconservancy.wordpress.com/2011/05/21/wind-concerns-ontario-backs-protection-of-ostrander-point/>).

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Table 1. Species at risk or of conservation concern occurring on Ostrander Point Crown Land Block. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are known from breeding records or are likely to breed in the area. Others use the area. The Ontario list is from Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Species/2ColumnSubPage/276722.html>) and Canada list is from the Species at Risk Act Public Registry (http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/search/default_e.cfm).

END = Endangered - A species facing imminent extinction or extirpation in Ontario or Canada.

THR = Threatened - A species that is at risk of becoming endangered in Ontario or Canada if limiting factors are not reversed.

SC = Special Concern - A species with characteristics that make it sensitive to human activities or natural events.

Species	Ontario List	Canada
Barn Swallow	THR	THR
Black Tern	SC	NAR
Blanding's Turtle *	THR	THR
Bobolink *	THR	THR
Chimney Swift	THR	THR
Common Nighthawk *	SC	THR
Eastern Meadowlark *	THR	THR
Eastern Musk Turtle *	THR	THR
Eastern Whip-poor-will*	THR	THR
Golden-Winged Warbler*	SC	THR
Henslow's Sparrow*	END	END
King Rail*	END	END
Least Bittern*	THR	THR
Loggerhead Shrike*	END	END
Milksnake*	SC	SC
Monarch Butterfly*	SC	SC
Northern Map Turtle*	SC	SC
Peregrine Falcon	THR	SC
Red-headed Woodpecker*	SC	THR
Rusty Blackbird	-	SC
Short-eared Owl	SC	SC
Snapping Turtle*	SC	SC

Fabulous Fall Fungi

3-5 October, 2012

Queen's University Biological Station

Now in its third year, the main focus of this three-day workshop is on learning to identify the wide variety of mushrooms and other fungi growing at this time of year (last year we identified 135 species). This is complemented by lectures and discussions on fungal ecology, natural history, uses, and how to demystify the scientific names. If time permits, we will also look at slime moulds, a fascinating group of organisms traditionally studied by mycologists. Suitable for all levels, this workshop is a wonderful opportunity to become better acquainted with the wonderful world of fungi. Limited class size (12 adults), so register early.

All-inclusive workshop fee: \$295 (includes instruction, all meals, accommodation, and printed handouts.). For more details and to register:
www.queensu.ca/qubs/events.html.

Monarch Waystation Project

The Monarch Waystation Project is now in full swing. Plants have been obtained, and many have been planted, but there is still a lot to be done. If you are interested in seeing what a waystation actually is, or would like to follow its progress, or perhaps, like to volunteer, I suggest you check out the website
www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/projects/MonarchWaystation/index.php.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information, check our website

www.ofnc.ca.

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait until the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance, so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities. Attendees may have to pay \$5 parking per vehicle.

BIRD STATUS LINE: *Phone 613-860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 613-860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.*

KID FRIENDLY EXCURSIONS: *Kids are welcome on all of our trips. We have highlighted particular hikes as 'kid friendly' as these are most likely to be enjoyed by typical children. Of course, depending on your child's/children's interests and stamina feel free to bring them along on any events. For events tailored to kids, check out the Macoun Field Club (<http://www.ofnc.ca/macoun/index.php>).*

Friday

20 July

10:00 a.m.

to

mid-

afternoon

BOTANY NEAR BURRITT'S RAPIDS

Leader: Eleanor Thomson (613-269-3523)

Meet: 310 Haskins Road, Burritt's Rapids. From Ottawa take Hwy 416 to Kemptville (exit 34). Go west (right) on Hwy 43. Turn right onto CR 23. Turn left onto Haskins Road.

We will be exploring a sugar maple woodland and looking at anything and everything (botanical and otherwise!) of interest to participants. Since the area has never been farmed, the original native plants are still there. We may also look at some alvar and roadside plants in the area adjacent. Bring a raincoat if rainy, binoculars, camera, hand lens, field guides and snack. Those who would like to stay on into the afternoon should also bring a lunch.

Saturday

28 July

10 a.m.

to

12 noon

VISIT TO MER BLEUE PEATLAND CARBON STUDY

Leaders: Elyn Humphreys and Lynn Ovenden

Meet: Dewberry Trail Parking Lot, P23 off Dolman Ridge Road (take Anderson Rd. to Dolman Ridge Rd.) [Call Lynn at 613-764-1867 between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. on Saturday if in doubt about the weather.]

Raindate:

Tuesday

7 August

6:00 p.m.

to

8:00 p.m.

Researchers from four universities are engaged in studying the peatland carbon cycles in Mer Bleue Bog. Dr. Humphreys will give us a tour of the facilities and we shall see the instrumentation and how it is being used. We will learn the reasons why this carbon cycle is being studied, some of the interesting results, and what it tells us about the history and the present state of this wonderful bog. Along the way, we will look at characteristic plants and other wonders. Most of the walk is along boardwalk but wear long pants and sturdy shoes for a short walk through the woods.

Sunday

5 August

9:00 a.m.

to

1:00 p.m.

DRAGONFLY OUTING AT MUD LAKE

Leaders: Chris Lewis and Gillian Mastromatteo

Meet: Entrance to the filtration plant on Cassels Road and Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake).

As of 2011, 65 species of odonates have been recorded from the Britannia area—well above the average number for similar-sized geographical areas in eastern Ontario. Such rich diversity is remarkable not only for Ottawa, but also for such a small area in the heart of the city. While we don't expect to see all 65 species, we do hope to encounter many of Britannia's common inhabitants and perhaps an unusual migrant or two. For background information regarding the odonates found in Ottawa-Gatineau and in Britannia, please see the following *T&L* issues: Jul-Sept 2008; Jan-Mar 2009; Jan-Mar 2010; Oct-Dec 2011; and Jan-Mar 2012. Please bring a field guide, net and magnifying lens if you have one; however, heavy rain will cancel this outing.

Sunday
12 August
2:30 p.m.
to
7:00 p.m.

DUCK ISLANDS BY CANOE

Leaders: Dan Brunton & Hume Douglas

Meet: At the Blair Road Boat Launch where Massey Lane meets the Ottawa River (near the North end of Blair Rd.). By bus this is a 1.7 km walk north from the Montreal/Blair stop.

Come and explore two mostly undisturbed islands in the Ottawa River near Rockliffe. Their shores include wetlands and deciduous forests, with the possibility of rare plants. In addition to the above-water vegetation we will look at some of the expected diverse pondweeds below the surface. Birds, fish, insects, and other organisms will also be examined. Bring your canoeing gear, and snacks and drinks for yourself. Life jackets, an extra paddle, and a safety kit with a bailer, whistle, and flashlight are required for each boat. Note that the Ottawa River can have heavy boat traffic, strong winds and moderate currents in this area. If you have extra canoe space, or will need one, please write to ofnc@ofnc.ca. More information on the site can be found at this independent web site: <http://www.neilyworld.com/neilyworld/oreo6.htm>.

Saturday
18 August
12:00 noon
to
5:00 p.m.

LARVAE OF DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFLIES: SEARCHING FOR, CAPTURING, IDENTIFYING, AND PRESERVING.

Leaders: Raymond Hutchinson and Benoît Ménard

Location: Parc du Lac Beauchamp, Gatineau, Québec. Take King Edward Ave. North, continue to Highway 5 North to Exit 2 for Highway 50 East and get off at Exit 139 for Maloney Blvd. Continue about 8 km on Maloney Blvd. and turn left at sign for Parc du Lac Beauchamp. Meet at the main building across from the beach. Carpooling at 11:20 a.m. on the north side of the LCBO parking lot at King Edward and Rideau. There is not much place to park, but people needing rides will be able to accompany those with cars.

Dragonflies and damselflies (odonates) have become increasingly popular with naturalists, but their larvae are little-known. Join two of Canada's few experts on these aquatic animals as they show you how to search for, capture, identify, and preserve them in order to potentially start your own collection. Come prepared for the weather and uneven terrain (sturdy shoes). Bring your camera if you want. This event will take place rain or shine.

Sunday
19 August
9:00 a.m.
to
about
5:00 p.m.

OTTAWA VALLEY GEOHERITAGE IN PERTH, ONTARIO

Leaders: Allan Donaldson and Paul Gammon

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza.

Join Allan Donaldson (emeritus Earth Sciences professor from Carleton University) and Paul Gammon (Geological Survey of Canada), in an exploration of local geology in nearby Perth. We will begin at the Perth Museum (Matheson House), where many interesting geological specimens are housed, including an example of a *Climactichnites* trackway (a fossilized trail inferred to have been made by a giant snail!), and the mineral perthite. So we can make reservations for lunch, please contact Holly Bickerton (hbickerton@hotmail.com) before **15 August** with the names of those in your group who will join us on the patio at The Stone Cellar Restaurant (www.thestonecellar.ca). You are also welcome to bring a packed lunch to enjoy under shade in the adjacent park. In the afternoon, we will explore an outdoor geo-heritage display in Perth where numerous blocks and boulders of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks have been gathered from nearby areas of the Ottawa Valley to illustrate basic geological relationships, and then visit two sites outside Perth where strata are replete with impressive structures and fossils. Please come prepared for the weather, and bring a hand lens if you have one. This event will run rain or shine.

Saturday
8 September
8:30 a.m.
to
12 noon

BEGINNERS INTRODUCTION TO NATURE

Kid friendly

Leaders: Dave Moore and Bev McBride

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre near Pizza Pizza (8:30 a.m.) or at Britannia Conservation Area, Mud Lake (8:45 a.m.). Come explore one of Ottawa's premier birding and natural history areas with two of our finest naturalists. Birds will be migrating through the area, late summer and fall flowers will be in bloom and you may see turtles. There is lots of Poison Ivy in the area, so please wear long pants and sturdy shoes (no shorts or sandals), and a hat is always advisable. Bring binoculars and a hand lens if you have them. Bug repellent may be necessary. This trip is limited to 12 people so please register with Dave at redstart@vif.com or 613-729-9330 to secure a place and so that you can be notified if there is a change in plans.

Tuesday	BIRDS AND BIRD WATCHING IN JAMAICA
11 September	Speaker: Paul Jones (Ottawa birder and photographer)
7:00 p.m.	Location: Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.
Social & Club business	Jamaica has over 324 recorded species of birds, including 28 endemic species—birds that only occur there and nowhere else. On an expedition to the island, Paul worked closely with local guides and was able to see them all, including the stunning Red-billed Streamer-tail, a spectacular hummingbird, and the elusive, mountain-dwelling Jamaican Blackbird. Please join us at this interesting event celebrating the beauty of Jamaica, its birds and the importance of eco-tourism in protecting vulnerable habitat.
7:30 p.m. Formal program	

Saturday	EXPLORING THE BARRON RIVER CANYON,
15 September	ALGONQUIN PARK *Kid friendly*
8:00 a.m.	Leaders: Jeff and Angela Skevington(613-832-1970).
to	Meet: Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the carpool parking lot, northeast corner of intersection of Highway 417 and County Rd. 29 (just east of Arnprior) (exit from Hwy. 417 and parking lot is just north of highway on the right (east) side).
Sunday	No registration required, but it is recommended that you join the yahoo group listed below to receive updates and to arrange any carpooling. **Participants must bring their own canoe and necessary food, and arrange accom-modation (see below). A park entrance fee also applies.**
16 September	This is a two-day trip to the east side of Algonquin. September is typically an exquisite time to visit the park. It is quiet, the scenery is superb, there are still lots of birds around and there is a good chance to see a variety of mammals. On Saturday we will drive 2.5 hours to the East Side (near Achray) and explore the Barron Canyon and Grand Lake areas from the hiking trails available at these sites. Bring a pienie lunch for both days and dinner for Saturday —we will eat wherever we happen to be at the appropriate times. We will be able to make a fire for dinner if you plan to cook something. The leaders intend to camp in the Achray campground. For those not wishing to camp, there are hotels in Petawawa and Pembroke, or it may be possible to stay at the Algonquin Portage (1352 Barron Canyon Road - Phone 613-735-1795). We will lead those who are interested and not too tired after dinner to try some wolf howling.

Saturday **EXPLORING THE BARRON RIVER CANYON,**
15 September **ALGONQUIN PARK cont'd**
8:00 a.m. On Sunday we will take our canoes to Squirrel Rapids (don't
to worry, it's very placid and easy paddling) and make our way to
Sunday Barron Canyon to see it from below. There is a very short portage
16 September (~100 m)—a great way to learn some new things if you haven't
paddled before. We will help you on the portage and teach you
how to paddle if this is all new to you. We will head back to
Ottawa in the late afternoon with anticipated arrival at around 8 or
9 p.m. This trip will go rain or shine. Expect the following costs:
park day passes or a camping pass for each vehicle for each day
(see <http://www.parkreports.com/fees/dayuse/2012> for rates),
accommodation and canoe rental (for rentals try Algonquin Bound
(800-704-4537), Algonquin Portage (see above) or any of the
Ottawa outfitters.

If you would like to join a discussion group for this event, to
arrange carpooling, canoe sharing, organize a different meeting
point, ask questions, etc., send an e-mail to:
OFNC_Outings-subscribe@yahoogroups.ca. This is a private
discussion group that is used to coordinate outings like this.

Saturday **MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHY NIGHT**
22 September ***Kid friendly***
7:00 p.m. **Location:** Fletcher Wildlife Garden.
Coordinator: Fenja Brodo 613-723-2054, fbrodo@sympatico.ca.
So many of us take pictures on Club outings or on our own and this
is an opportunity to share your special natural history shots with
fellow members. Our Club has a computer (IBM compatible),
projector and screen at the Fletcher. Bring your digital images (15
max. per person) on a memory stick or similar device. If you let us
know, we can also accommodate film. A Saturday evening, we
hope, will encourage some of our youth to show their prowess with
a camera. The mix of different topics and different voices should
make for an interesting evening. Hot and cold drinks will be
available and we encourage participants to bring desserts to share.
Please let Fenja know if you plan to contribute images to the
evening.

Sunday **NATURAL HISTORY OF THE LUSKVILLE AREA**
23 September ***Kid friendly***
8:30 a.m. **Leader:** Carolyn Callaghan
to **Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of parking
2:00 p.m. lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road, near Pizza Pizza.
 Alternatively, meet at 9:20 a.m. at 611 Chemin Cregheur near
 Luskville, Quebec.
 Join Carolyn to explore their new farm and nearby areas along the
 southern edge of the Gatineau escarpment. We will be looking at
 everything natural history wise on this outing, from birds and
 insects to plants and mushrooms.

Sunday **ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF ONTARIO ANNUAL**
30 September **MEETING NEAR DUNROBIN**
Contact person: Jeff Skevington (613-832-1970)
 If you are interested in insects, this meeting is for you! We are
 meeting at the Bonnenfant YMCA/YWCA camp at 1620 Sixth
 Line (near Dunrobin). The ESO website will have all of the
 information that you need if you are considering attending the
 entire meeting (<http://www.entsocont.ca/index.php>). If the cost of
 registration is too high, or if you only want a taste of the meeting
 and would like to meet like-minded bug people, consider coming
 to our open hike on Sunday afternoon. Everyone with an interest in
 insects is welcome to attend for free. Meet on Sunday afternoon
 September 30 (time will be posted on the ESO website) at
 Bonnenfant Y camp (on Sixth Line near the NW corner of the
 Shirley's Bay military property). The hike will be from 1 to 2
 hours in duration. Note that our banquet speaker (Art Evans) will
 be doing a book signing (Field Guide to the Insects of North
 America at \$20 a copy) in conjunction with the hike.

Wednesday **OTTAWA FORESTS AND GREENSPACE ADVISORY**
3 October **COMMITTEE (OFGAC)**
7:30 p.m. **Speaker:** Heather Hamilton, Chair
 Location: Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretation Centre.
 Heather will introduce us to the workings of this volunteer city
 committee, how it operates, some recent successes, and continuing
 challenges in relation to preserving trees, natural areas and
 biodiversity in the city. She will also bring us up to date with the
 Emerald Ash Borer, how our Ottawa trees are faring and what we
 can do to protect them.

Tuesday	LOONS AND ACID RAIN
9 October	Speaker: Robert Alvo
7:00 p.m.	Location: Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod
Social & Club	Streets.
business	Learn about loon biology and how a 25-year study sought to find out how loons have been affected by lake acidification in Sudbury, Ontario, and beyond. Rob's visual tour will take you on some of the worst roads in Ontario (using one of the worst cars on the road), and into some of the clearest lakes in Ontario. Try to guess what happened on an acidic lake to make a large loon chick die with a bulge in its throat, which turned out to be made up of undigested fish, crayfish, dragonfly larvae, and whirligig beetles. Rob will also talk about ideas for further research in the study area.
7:30 p.m.	
Formal	
program	

Saturday	CRANBERRY CRAWL
27 October	*Kid friendly*
8:00 a.m.	Leaders: Tyler Smith & Laurel McIvor
to	Meet: At Costco on Cyrville Road for carpooling. Park on the north side of the building facing Innes Rd. The Innes Rd. exit is just past the split on Highway 417 as you head towards Montreal. Alternatively, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Mer Bleue Bog Trail Parking Lot.
1:00 p.m.	Join Tyler and Laurel for a hands-on hike to explore the Mer Bleue Bog and learn more about wild cranberries and their natural habitat. Following this hike, we will carpool to the Upper Canada Cranberry Farm to discover more about local cranberry cultivation, harvesting and processing. Bring your lunch and lawn chairs or blankets—there will be special prizes for creative lunches featuring cranberries!

DEADLINE: Material intended for the October-December issue must be in the editor's hands by 1 August, 2012. Mail your manuscripts to:

Karen McLachlan Hamilton
2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7
H: (613) 838-4943; email: hamilton@storm.ca

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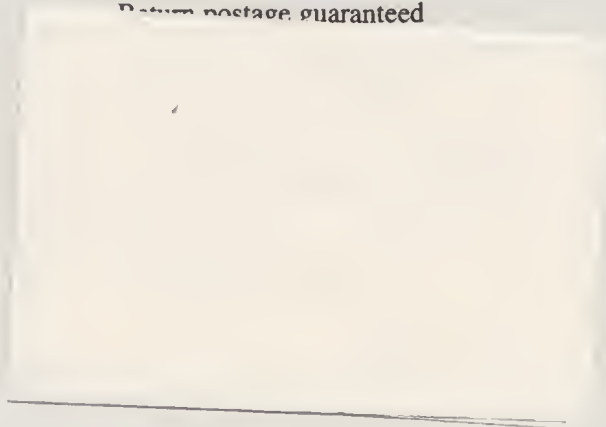
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